



Louisiana's Old State Capitol CLASSROOM

Mission

Louisiana's Old State Capitol
Center for Political and Governmental History

Provides a learning experience in Louisiana history
and the democratic process through exhibitions,
educational outreach, and the arts.

This historic and diverse facility advances
the visitor's knowledge of our rich cultural heritage
and vibrant political tradition.

BALLOTS NOT BULLETS . . .



LOUISIANA'S OLD STATE CAPITOL
CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS
NATIONAL STUDENT/PARENT MOCK ELECTION
NOVEMBER 2, 2000

www.sec.state.la.us
www.mockelection2000.net

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO LOUISIANA'S
NATIONAL STUDENT/PARENT MOCK ELECTION

A Project
developed by Louisiana's Old State Capitol
Education Department



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BALLOTS

NOT BULLETS . . .



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Dear Educator:

I would like to thank you and say how happy I am to see you join the thousands of other Louisiana teachers who are participating in the 2000 National Student/Parent Mock Election. As the Chief Elections Officer of this state and a former civics teacher, I support this program because it instills in our students a sense of responsibility to participate in the democratic process and it teaches them how to make informed voting decisions.

Again this year, the Old State Capitol will serve as Louisiana's Mock Election Headquarters and will be the center of activity for this program. If at any time you need assistance or have any questions about the mock election, please feel free to call us toll free at 1-800-488-2968.

As in 1996, a grand celebration is planned for November 2, 2000 National Student/Parent Mock Election Day. Students from around the state will participate in a political parade, a mock convention (where students will voice vote their parish totals for the presidential candidates) and attend a mock inaugural ball. Details regarding these activities will be forthcoming. CNN is again anticipating covering the events live from the Old State Capitol and I thank you in advance for your participation.

In a time when voter turnout is at an all time low, and so many Americans do not exercise their right and privilege to vote, you are to be commended for doing your part to excite our Louisiana students in our democratic process. With programs such as the National/Student Parent Mock Election I believe that lessons learned today can become habits for tomorrow.

Our goal this year is to reach 750,000 students. Your participation will help us reach this goal and ensure another successful National Student/Parent Mock Election. Again, I say thank you and look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "W. Fox McKeithen". The signature is stylized with a large "W" and "F".

W. Fox McKeithen



IN YOUR CLASSROOM

THE MOCK ELECTION IN YOUR CLASSROOM

The Mock Election is an excellent learning tool for students of all ages. This project is designed to instill in our students a sense of citizenship. Students participating in the Mock Election will show increased awareness in political decision making, involvement in current issues, the belief that voting is important, and the belief that social studies classes are relevant. It will also encourage students to discuss political topics with their parents.

GOALS

- ☆ Students will understand the citizen's participatory role in the democratic process.
- ☆ Students will understand the importance of getting to know each candidate and his position on particular issues.
- ☆ Students will understand how to study the issues in order to make an informed voting decision.

Woven into Louisiana's classroom lessons are the Foundation Skills developed and promoted by Louisiana's Department of Education. *Citizenship* is one of five Foundation Skills that all Louisiana students are expected to gain from their classroom experiences. As a Foundation Skill, it is defined as "the application of the understanding of the ideals, rights, and responsibilities of active participation in a democratic republic that includes working respectfully and productively together for the benefit of the individual and the community; being accountable for one's choices and actions and understanding their impact on oneself and others; knowing one's civil, constitutional, and statutory rights; and mentoring others to be productive citizens and lifelong learners."

As Louisiana's headquarters for the Mock Election, it is the Old State Capitol's hope that the lessons provided in this curriculum guide will offer teachers a tool to teach citizenship to our K-12 students.



IN YOUR CLASSROOM

LOUISIANA CONTENT STANDARDS

While this project will be especially beneficial to social studies teachers, we hope it will be a school-wide endeavor. In an attempt to encourage participation across the curriculum, we have provided Louisiana's Department of Education standards and benchmarks from various subject areas. Each standard is listed with a sample activity. Please see *Additional Activities* on page 11 for more ideas.

Subject Area	Louisiana's Content Standards	Sample Classroom Activity
Social Studies	<p>Civics Students develop an understanding of the structure and purposes of government, the foundations of the American democratic system, and the role of the United States in the world, while learning about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.</p> <p>History Students develop a sense of historical time and historical perspective as they study the history of their community, state, nation, and world.</p>	<p>See <i>Meet the Candidates</i> on page 4. See <i>Understand the Issues</i> on page 6. See <i>Y2Vote!</i> on page 8. See <i>State Issues</i> on page 10.</p>
Language Arts	<p>Standard One Students read, comprehend, and respond to a range of materials, using a variety of strategies for different purposes.</p> <p>Standard Five Students locate, select, and synthesize information from a variety of texts, media, references, and technological sources to acquire and communicate knowledge.</p>	<p>See <i>Meet the Candidates</i> on page 4. See <i>Understand the Issues</i> on page 6. See <i>Y2Vote!</i> on page 10.</p>
Art	<p>Creative Expression Students develop creatively through the application of knowledge, ideas, skills, and organizational abilities.</p>	<p>Create campaign posters or buttons. See <i>Meet the Candidates</i> activity on page 4.</p>
Math	<p>Number and Number Relations In problem-solving investigations, students demonstrate an understanding of the real number system and communicate the relationships within that system using a variety of techniques and tools.</p>	<p>Study the electoral college, predict the outcome of the election, watch the election returns.</p>
Science	<p>Science and the Environment In learning environmental science, students will develop an appreciation of the natural environment, learn the importance of environmental quality, and acquire a sense of stewardship. As consumers and citizens, they will be able to recognize how our personal, professional, and political actions affect the natural world.</p>	<p>The environment has become a major issue in recent elections. How are the major candidates responding to this issue?</p>



MEET THE CANDIDATES

Some students may not realize that there are more than the two major candidates running for President. This activity will enable students to get to know the candidates and allow them to understand the issues, the platforms, and the differences among the candidates. This activity will also help students make their decision for the Mock Election.

☆ Classroom Activity

1. Divide students into groups of 4 or 5 to complete the **Meet the Candidates** activity sheet on the following page. Assign each group a major candidate and a minor candidate (or a candidate running in a local election). Students should use the newspaper, Internet, magazines, etc. to research candidate biographies.
2. As a class, discuss the results of the research on candidates. Create a chart for students to record information on each candidate.
3. Have students meet in groups again to create a campaign button, poster, brochure, or commercial for a candidate. Students may wish to review contemporary and historical campaign ads.
4. Display the projects in your classroom or library.

☆ K-12 Benchmarks

Benchmarks K-4

- **Social Studies:** identify key members of government at the local, state, and national levels and describe their powers and the limits on their powers (C-1A-E5)
- **Art:** produce imaginative works of art generated from individual and group ideas (CE-1VA-E6)

Benchmarks 5-8

- **Social Studies:** analyze the importance of political parties, campaigns, and elections in the American political system (C-1B-M5)
- **Social Studies:** communicate the importance of knowledge to competent and responsible political participation and leadership (C-1D-M5)
- **Art:** identify the relationships between the arts and other disciplines through art production (CE-1VA-H2)

Benchmarks 9-12

- **Social Studies:** evaluate roles of political parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics (C-1B-H5)
- **Social Studies:** analyze and evaluate the importance of political leadership public service, and a knowledgeable citizenry to American constitutional democracy (C-1D-H4)

☆ Resources for Research

OFFICIAL WEB SITES

www.georgewbush.com
www.algore2000.com
www.votenader.com
www.gopatgo.org

TRY THESE NEWS WEB SITES

ABC CNN
CBS FOX
CNBC NBC

MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS

www.timeforkids.com
www.washingtonpost.com
www.newyorktimes.com

WEB SITES FOR THE INFORMED VOTER

www.vote-smart.org
www.publicagenda.com

*Remember to **READ** the newspaper for campaigns and elections information*

☆ Beyond Books

- ✓ What are the qualifications for running for President of the United States?
- ✓ Identify all of the 2000 presidential candidates and their running mates.
- ✓ Identify and briefly describe the major and minor political parties.
- ✓ In your opinion, what are the qualities of a good leader? In your opinion, which candidate meets those qualifications?
- ✓ Study the endorsements of a particular candidate. Why do you think a particular organization supports a particular candidate?
- ✓ Identify candidates running in local elections in your community.



MEET THE CANDIDATES

A BIOGRAPHY

Candidate's Full Name _____

Political Party Affiliation _____

Running Mate _____

Photo

Age:

Religion:

Residence:

Family:

Educational Background:

Public Service Background:

Endorsements (Support):

What leadership qualities does he/she have? What are his/her strengths? What are his/her weaknesses?

How does he/she feel about key issues such as education, crime, health care, campaign finance reform, etc.?

Why would you vote for him/her?

Why wouldn't you vote for him/her?



UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES

☆ Classroom Activity

Issues are special topics that are of concern to voters. Some issues that are important in the 2000 Presidential election are education, crime, tax policies, health care, and the environment.

Political party **platforms** outline the principles and recommendations of the party on a variety of issues. The platforms contain “planks” (positions on specific subjects) that might benefit or disappoint different groups of people.

1. As a class, brainstorm issues that are important to young people. What issues are important to this election? Why?
2. Using the daily newspaper, the Internet, and news programs on television and radio complete the **Issues** chart on the next page. Note the differences of opinion and platforms among the candidates.
3. Divide students into small groups and have each group develop their own platform.

☆ K-12 Benchmarks

Benchmarks K-4

- **Social Studies:** identify and describe some of the major responsibilities of local, state, and national governments (C-1A-E4)
- **Language Arts:** interpret texts to generate connections to real-life situations (ELA-1-E6)

Benchmarks 5-8

- **Social Studies:** discuss issues involving the rights and responsibilities of individuals in American society (C-1D-M3)
- **Social Studies:** communicate the importance of knowledge to competent and responsible political participation and leadership (C-1D-M5)
- **Language Arts:** locate, gather, and select information using graphic organizers, outlining, note taking, summarizing, interviewing, and surveying to produce documented texts and graphics (ELA-5-M3)

Benchmarks 9-12

- **Social Studies:** evaluate issues related to the differences between American ideals and the realities of American social and political life (C-1B-H4)
- **Social Studies:** examine the major responsibilities of the national government for domestic and foreign policy (C-1A-H6)
- **Language Arts:** locate and evaluate information sources (e.g., print materials, databases, CD-ROM references, Internet information, electronic reference works, community and government data, television and radio resources, audio and visual materials) (ELA-5-H3)

☆ Resources for Research

TAKE A LOOK AT THE ISSUES

www.issues2000.org
www.publicagenda.org
www.democracynetwork.org

CHECK OUT THE PLATFORMS

www.democrats.org
www.rnc.org
www.reformparty.org
www.greenparty.org

POLITICAL DIRECTORIES

www.webwhiteblue.org
www.dnet.org
www.vote-smart.org

Remember to **READ** the newspaper
for information on issues

☆ Beyond Books

- ✓ What are the major issues for Election 2000?
- ✓ Which issues most concern you? Why?
- ✓ What are the major parties saying about the issues?
- ✓ Compare and contrast the candidates' views on the issues.
- ✓ Create a Focus Group in your school to discuss the issues that concern young voters.
- ✓ Invite candidates from local elections to speak in your classroom.
- ✓ Conduct a Mock Debate in your classroom or during a school assembly.



UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES

CANDIDATE	ISSUE #1	ISSUE #2	ISSUE #3	ISSUE #4
DEMOCRAT CANDIDATE				
REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE				
OTHER CANDIDATE				
OTHER CANDIDATE				
YOUR OPINION				



Y2Vote!

☆ Classroom Activity

- A. An important part of a democracy is the individual's right to vote. However, many individuals, especially young people, do not vote. Discuss the history of the right to vote. When were African Americans given the right? Women? Native Americans?
- B. According to a study conducted by the National Association of Secretaries of State, "the percentage of young people who vote continues to drop and youth participation in the community remains distinctly apolitical."
1. As a class, discuss why the voter turnout among young people is so low.
 2. Discuss how politicians and their campaigns can address the concerns of young voters.
 3. Based on these and other class discussions, students should individually identify the issues that concern them. Each student should choose at least 3 issues.
 4. Complete the **Y2Vote** chart on the next page. This should help students make their decision for voting in the Mock Election.

K-12 Benchmarks

Benchmarks K-4

- **Social Studies:** identify and discuss civic traits that are important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy (C-1D-E3)
- **Social Studies:** describe the many ways that citizens can participate in and contribute to their communities and to American society (C-1D-E4)

Benchmarks 5-8

- **Social Studies:** identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens and explain their importance to the individual and society (C-1D-M2)
- **Social Studies:** describe the many ways by which citizens can organize, monitor, and help to shape politics and government at local, state, and national levels (C-1D-M4)

Benchmarks 9-12

- **Social Studies:** evaluate and defend positions regarding the personal and civic responsibilities of citizens in American constitutional democracy (C-1D-H2)
- **Social Studies:** analyze and evaluate the importance of political leadership, public service, and a knowledgeable citizenry to American constitutional democracy (C-1D-H4)

☆ Resources for Research

WEB SITES FOR THE INFORMED VOTER

www.vote-smart.org
www.publicagenda.com
www.FreedomChannel.com
www.lwv.org

RESOURCES FOR YOUNG VOTERS

www.youthvote2000.org
www.yvote2000.com
www.ypa.org
www.rockthevote.org

*Remember to **READ** the newspaper for campaigns and elections information*

☆ Beyond Books

- ✓ What are the qualifications to vote in Louisiana?
- ✓ Why do people vote? Why do some people NOT vote? Why is the lowest voter turnout among young voters?
- ✓ Research election history. What elections have been decided by one vote?
- ✓ What is the electoral college? How does it work?
- ✓ What role do the following play in the Louisiana election process? [Registrar of Voters, Clerk of Court, Secretary of State, Department of Elections]
- ✓ Besides voting, what other ways can citizens become involved in campaigns, elections, or politics in general.



Y2VOTE!

Every day through newspaper editorials, Internet articles, and TV programs, many individuals express their opinions on the campaign issues. During the Mock Election, you will be able to express your opinion as you vote for or against particular candidates and issues.

Before voting in the Mock Election, you should decide WHO you are voting for and WHY you are voting for a particular candidate.

Issue #1	I feel strongly about this issue because . . .
Issue #2	I feel strongly about this issue because . . .
Issue #3	I feel strongly about this issue because . . .

When I vote during the Mock Election, I am going to vote for _____ .
I feel strongly about voting for this candidate because:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



STATE ISSUES

In addition to voting for candidates, students are also encouraged to vote for national and state issues. The national issues will be provided by the National Student/Parent Mock Election and *The New York Times Mock Election Issues Forum*. The state issues are provided below. All issues will appear on your ballot. Students are encouraged to study all aspects of the issue to make an informed decision on their Mock Election day.

☆ Issue # 1: School Safety	☆ Sample Ballot
<p>Improving school safety is an important issue to students and their parents, teachers, and administrators. As a student in Louisiana, what do you think will help increase safety in schools?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a class, brainstorm the pros and cons of the list of measures presented in the sample ballot. 2. Besides those listed in the sample ballot, what other things can be done to improve safety throughout our schools? 3. Draft a proposal to your school administrator or school board office reflecting a plan of action to be taken by your school to prevent school violence. 	<p>In your opinion, which of the following three measures should be taken to improve school safety ?</p> <p>Z mandatory school uniforms</p> <p>Z metal detectors</p> <p>Z regular locker checks</p> <p>Z video cameras in classrooms</p> <p>Z clear book sacks</p> <p>Z mandating character education throughout the curriculum</p> <p>Z all of the above</p>
☆ Issue #2: School Prayer	☆ Sample Ballot
<p>Prayer in public schools has continued to be a debatable issue throughout the years. This issue has recently reappeared in the news in Texas where prayers before football games were questioned. What is your opinion of this controversial issue?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a class, discuss the pros and cons of government led prayers in schools. 2. Research and discuss the history behind legislation regarding prayer in school. 	<p>Should government lead students in prayer in public schools?</p> <p>Z Yes</p> <p>Z No</p> <p>Should government lead students in prayer before athletic events?</p> <p>Z Yes</p> <p>Z No</p>



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

School-Wide

conduct Poster and Essay contests based on the election, a candidate, or an issue
utilize the library by promoting the mock election on a school wide basis featuring books on presidents, newspaper articles on the election, projects or posters created by students
host a Government Bee, testing students' knowledge of history and civics
use Newspapers In Education (NIE) programs to learn about Election 2000
host a political debate
host a voter-registration or voter-education program

Classroom Activities

invite local politicians to make a field trip to your school
create voter-pledge cards for students to complete, promising that they will register to vote when they turn 18
study tactics and political strategies used to sway voters
teach mini-lessons on the candidates, the issues, and voting
have students create brochures on a candidate
watch and critique presidential debates
decide how donations from special interest groups can affect the campaign
plan a field trip to the voter-registration office
research "how to" vote and create a brochure
conduct interviews to learn of others' voting experiences
research the history of voting rights
design buttons, pamphlets, posters, TV and radio jingles to promote voting or a candidate
interview one Democrat, one Republican, and an individual supporting a minor party candidate
create a platform based on your beliefs and opinions
research how to become involved in politics, campaigns, and elections other than voting
write or e-mail your presidential candidates, congressional candidates, or candidates running in local elections
write an editorial to your local newspaper supporting a candidate or an issue